

1-1-2009

OT 701 Biblical Aramaic

Bill T. Arnold

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Arnold, Bill T., "OT 701 Biblical Aramaic" (2009). *Syllabi*. Book 75.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/75>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

Syllabus

Course: OT701 W1 (SP 2009)
Title: Biblical Aramaic
Hours: 3.00
Published: Yes, on 12/11/2008
Prerequisites:

OT502

Department: Old Testament
Faculty: Dr. Bill Arnold



Email: bill.arnold@asburyseminary.edu
Office: MC 207
SPO: 787

Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 on Tuesday and Thursday from 4:00p to 5:15p in BC223.

Maximum Registration: 15

Catalog Description: These courses introduce the student, who already has a working knowledge of Biblical Hebrew, to the language and literatures of the ancient Near East, primarily to provide a linguistic and cultural context for the interpretation of the Old Testament. All courses require OT 501/502 as prerequisite.

Objectives:

SUBJECT TO CHANGE PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 1, 2009

- (1) To broaden the student's understanding of Old Testament faith through firsthand experience with the original languages.
- (2) To provide the student with a basic understanding of Aramaic grammar in general, and to develop a reading knowledge of the Aramaic sections of Ezra and Daniel in particular.
- (3) To equip the student with a basic vocabulary of Biblical Aramaic.
- (4) To demonstrate the elementary principles of comparative Semitics through comparison of Aramaic with Classical Hebrew.
- (5) To increase the student's facility in Classical Hebrew by gaining a working knowledge of this additional Semitic language.

Required Texts:

Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907. Repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979.

Elliger, K., and W. Rudolph. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967-1977.

Rosenthal, Franz. *A Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. 6th ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995.

Recommended Texts:

Cook, Edward M. "The Orthography of Final Unstressed Long Vowels in Old and Imperial Aramaic." Pages 53-68 in *Sopher Mahir: Northwest Semitic Studies Presented to Stanislav Segert*. Ed. E. M. Cook. Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

_____. *Word Order in the Aramaic of Daniel*. Malibu, Calif.: Undena, 1986.

Dove, John F. "An Introductory Grammar of Biblical Aramaic: A Text and Workbook." M.A. thesis, Ashland Theological Seminary, 1994.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A., and Stephen A. Kaufman. *An Aramaic Bibliography, Part 1: Old, Official, and Biblical Aramaic*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1992.

Greenspahn, Frederick E. *An Introduction to Aramaic*. Atlanta: Scholars, 1999.

Jerusalimi, Isaac. *The Aramaic Sections of Ezra and Daniel: A Philological Commentary*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1978.

Johns, Alger F. *A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Andrews University Monographs 1. Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1963.

Jumper, James N. *An Annotated Answer Key to Alger Johns's A Short Grammar of Biblical Aramaic*. Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2003.

Köhler, Ludwig; Baumgartner, Walter; Stamm, Johann Jakob, and Richardson, M. E. J. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament; Volume V: Aramaic, Supplementary Bibliography*. 1st English ed. Leiden: E.J. Brill; 2000.

Course Requirements:

Method of Instruction

The course will have few lectures, primarily at the beginning to introduce and orient the student to the study of Aramaic, its location among the ancient Semitic languages, and its affinities with Biblical Hebrew. Most of the course will assume a seminar format in which discussion will center on specific Aramaic texts assigned for each class session. Points of discussion will involve grammatical details, interpretive methodology, comparative Semitic observations and any questions stemming from the student's work on the text.

Assignments

Students will be required to complete readings assigned throughout the course (see tentative schedule below). The student will keep a notebook or file which logs her or his readings of the Aramaic texts assigned, including specific verses read and dates completed. The notebook shall include parsing for especially difficult verbal forms, discussions of grammatically complicated sentences, comparative Semitics observations and any vocabulary notes needed to prepare for class discussion.

Examinations

There will be two examinations during the semester (see schedule below). In addition, vocabulary and grammatical quizzes will be assigned as appropriate. The second exam will include translations and parsing from the Book of Daniel. The final examination will be an opportunity for the student to treat a pericope selected from Daniel 7:9-28, commenting on all verbal forms, comparative Semitics observations, and interpretive issues arising from the text.

Research Paper

During the semester, the student will write a brief paper of no more than 2500 words on the topic of his or her choice from the list below (approximately 8-10 pages). In matters of form and style, the paper should follow Patrick H. Alexander, et al., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999). The student should make sure his or her name is clearly visible on the first page of the paper along with the SPO number. The paper should be stapled in the upper left corner with no bindings or folders of any kind. The paper is due at the beginning of class on May 14. There will be a penalty for late papers (one-third letter grade after the beginning of class on May 14 and a whole letter grade after May 15).

The topics will be chosen by March 19 and should be reported to the instructor in a one-page proposal that day. The purpose of this project is to provide background information for a better comprehension of the Aramaic language and the specific sections of Scripture under study. The following list of topics is partial. Other topics may be chosen in consultation with the professor.

- (a) The rise of the Arameans and their role in the ancient Near East.
- (b) Aramaic and its position in the Semitic family of languages.
- (c) Characteristic features of Old, Imperial, Middle and Late Aramaic, and the position of Biblical Aramaic in this schema.
- (d) The Neo-Babylonian Empire and the biblical witness to its role in history.
- (e) The Persians and Judah's restoration period, especially as they relate to the Aramaic portions of Ezra.
- (f) Greek rule in the Levant, the Hasmonean period, and implications for the Book of Daniel.

Evaluation:

Class performance/notebook 25%

Vocabulary Quizzes 10%

Examinations 40%

Research Paper 25%

Class Schedule:

Feb 10, Introduction

Feb 12, Ezra 1:1-4:8 (English), Kaufman, "Languages (Aramaic)," *ABD* 4:173-178, Collateral: Fitzmyer, "Phases," 57-84.

Feb 17, Ezra 4:8-12, Rosenthal, 1-63

Feb 19, Ezra 4:13 - 5:2

Feb 24, Ezra 5:3-17, Millard, "Arameans," *ABD* 1:345-350.

Feb 26, Ezra 6:1-8

Mar 3, EXAMINATION #1

Mar 5, Ezra 6:9-18, Ezra 7:1-11 (English), Ezra 7:12-20 (Aramaic)

Mar 10, Ezra 7:21-26, Daniel 1:1-2:4a (English), Daniel 2:4b-11

Mar 12, Daniel 2:12-16, Arnold, "Use of Aramaic," 1-16.

Mar 17, Daniel 2:17-30

Mar 19, Daniel 2:31-38, PAPER PROPOSALS DUE

Mar 24, Daniel 2:39 - 3:1-5

Mar 26, Daniel 3:6-12, Driver, "Book of Daniel," 110-19, 323-25.

Apr 7, Daniel 3:13-20

Apr 9, EXAMINATION #2

Apr 14, Daniel 3:21-33

Apr 16, Daniel 4:1-13

Apr 21, Daniel 4:14-25

Apr 23, Daniel 4:26-34

Apr 28, Daniel 5:1-10

Apr 30, Daniel 5:11-20

May 5, Daniel 5:21-30

May 7, Daniel 6:1-13

May 12, Daniel 6:14-25

May 14, Daniel 6:26 - 7:8

PAPER DUE

FINAL EXAM on Daniel 7:9-28 (Time TBA)